

Abstract

A method and apparatus for determining the base station and sector serving a target mobile station. A client makes a request to locate a target mobile station. A server connected to the client determines whether the client is authorized to make this request. If so, the server sends a request to the mobile network to determine the base station and sector currently serving the target mobile station. The mobile network returns information identifying the country, carrier, vendor, and region of the switch serving the mobile station. The server then queries a centralized database to translate between the non-standard format data identifying the base station and sector and a geographic location of that base station and sector. Advantageously, the arrangement is much less expensive than arrangements which seek to determine an exact location of the mobile station.